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What a Tangled Web the CIA Wove

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Cost Likely To Rise High Into Millions

By Richard Harwood

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IN 1947, THE YEAR the Central Intelligence Agency was born, a brawling Corsican from the docks of Marseilles was recruited to perform a service for the Western Allies.

His name was Ferri Pisani. His task was to see to it, by whatever means seemed appropriate, that Communists among the longshoremen of Marseilles would not impede the unloading of Marshall Plan cargoes in France.

Pisani did the job and got rich in the process. His CIA retainer was \$230,000 in cash. It was refreshed from time to time in the years that followed and Pisani's stature in the rough private world in which he moved increased accordingly. He became a symbol of the power that private men and private organizations often wield in the intricate game of international affairs.

It was evident to the CIA from the moment it commenced operations that men like Pisani and organizations like the trade union movement had an immensely important role to play in what President Kennedy was to call "the long twilight struggle" between the adversaries in the cold war.

A Direct Approach

It was NOT enough for the United States to arm its allies, to strengthen

governmental institutions, or to finance the industrial establishment through economic and military programs. Intellectuals, students, educators, trade unionists, journalists and professional men had to be reached directly, through their private concerns.

Operating from that premise, the CIA began in the late 1940s and early 1950s a vast program that was to involve not only such men as Pisani but most of the major private institutions in American life. The extent of that involvement and the subterfuges that were used to bring it about are now being dimly grasped as a result of the revelations of the past two weeks.

What is known to the press and the public now is still far less than what is not known, which is to say it is likely that the surface has been barely scratched. But certain basic facts seem clear enough.

The first is that many millions of dollars of public money have been used by the CIA, with no public accounting, to influence the political and ideological posture of private groups throughout the world, including many within the United States. How much money is involved is such a tightly held secret that the President of the United States, as of last week, apparently had no inkling of the answer. Only about \$15 million has been traced, but unsubstantiated rumors place the true figure in the hundreds of millions.

Top-Level Decision

THE SECOND self-evident fact is that the decision to fight the cold war covertly through private groups was no whimsical, unilateral decision by the men who have run the CIA for the past 20 years. As Under Secretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach reported to the President last week:

"When the Central Intelligence Agency first received support to the

work of certain American private organizations, it did not act on its own initiative but in accordance with national policies established by the National Security Council in 1952 through 1954. Throughout, it acted with the approval of senior interdepartmental committees, including the Secretaries of State and Defense or their representatives."

The agency also acted with the full knowledge and consent of the congressional committees created to oversee its operations. Its activities, in short, were the public policy, never publicly announced, of the Government of the United States.

It was a policy, moreover, that had the overt approval and collaboration of what Richard Rovere has described as the American Establishment, that loose coalition of lawyers, industrialists and financiers who are thought, rightly or wrongly, subtly to guide the course of public affairs in the United States.

A Business Connection

ALLEN DULLES, who ran the CIA in the 1950s, was a product of the New York law firm of Sullivan & Cromwell, which has always epitomized the Establishment. While he was in charge at the Agency, his business and legal confreres were used extensively to enable the CIA to achieve its secret purposes.

The Wall Street investment firm of Wood, Struthers & Winthrop provided "cover" for at least one CIA agent, Hans Tofte, by issuing him credentials as an employee of the firm. Samuel